STATEMENT OF EDITORIAL INTENT

Archaeological Review From Cambridge is a journal conceived and produced by students of the Department of Archaeology in the University of Cambridge. ARC was first published in 1981 and has returned to production with this issue, following a temporary hiatus.

ARC is to serve as a forum for the discussion of current archaeological research. It is designed to fill the gap which exists between the formal publication of major research projects in leading journals, and the more informal discussion which takes place at seminars and conferences. This means that although the standards of papers presented will be high, there will be room for the inclusion of 'work in progress' which might otherwise find no outlet in existing publications. The editorial committee intends to establish a journal with wide appeal by publishing thematic issues covering an extensive range of topics. The research interests of the graduate students within the department will necessarily be reflected in the topics chosen, but these interests are of sufficient diversity to allow the presentation of a broad range of themes. Above all, the journal will aim to promote the more extended discussion of subjects which are rarely debated outside the conference hall and by publishing twice a year, will provide the swift turnround that such discussion demands.

Issues will usually comprise a thematic section (containing papers relating to a particular topic), a general section, and commentary. The intention of the general section is to provide a forum within which subjects, not connected with the thematic section but of current interest, may be presented. The commentary is intended to cover shorter notes and contributions relating to topics arising from the study and practice of archaeology. These notes may include short discussions of archaeological practice and theory, correspondence and so on, as well as brief comments on more controversial issues, and on papers in previous issues. Book reviews will also be a regular feature of each issue.

Whilst every publication necessarily reflects the biases of its editorial committee, it is the editors' intention that the journal should not explicitly align itself to any particular academic standpoint, nor support any specific political stance. The interests of the journal will extend beyond the British Isles, though papers will be presented in English.

The members of the editorial board would like to thank all those students and staff of the Cambridge Archaeology Department who have shown interest in this venture and given their support and advice, and particularly thank Jill Bewley and Colin Shell for their assistance. Financial assistance for publication was provided by the Department of Archaeology, though the Department bears no responsibility for the journal.

FOREWORD: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC

Robert Bewley

This issue of Archaeological Review from Cambridge (ARC) developed out of a session on Archaeology and the Public presented at the 1982 Theoretical Archaeology Group Conference held in Durham. The response generated by that session emphasized the importance of this subject in archaeology today. The session's papers form the nucleus of the current issue, and thanks are due to Mike Parker Pearson (the organiser of the TAG session) for his co-operation. In most cases the papers have been revised, and I would like to thank all the authors for producing their papers so swiftly. This is particularly true for the additional papers from Brian Charge, Dave Crowther, Chris Chippindale, and Mark Leone (whose paper was given at a different session at TAG 1982).

The aim in this issue has been to highlight certain aspects of the relationship between professional archaeologists and other people interested in the past. Many viewpoints are expressed, but the underlying theme is the need for greater communication.

In soliciting these articles I have tried to present a broad and unbiased view of the role of the public in archaeology. The problem of communication between archaeologists and a wide general audience is not simply due to professional elitism but also to a lack of channels for adequate communication. Brian Charge's paper is an example of local impetus forging a relationship between three different professional bodies.

The most contentious aspect of the relationship between archaeologists and members of the public is that of 'treasure hunting'. Archaeologists are not in agreement amongst themselves as to how to cope with this hobby, but Dave Crowther's paper provides a good basis for discussion. The approach of Tony Gregory in Norfolk seems to be, the only way forward: co-operation and mutual education. 'STOP campaigns' (designed to curtail the activities of metal detectives) alienate many members of the public interested in the past.

Museums are examples of places where non-archaeologists (and archaeologists) can learn about the past; yet, as Leone and Gathercole stress, this is not enough. The date of an object or the excavation of a site is not as significant, on its own, as the information which it contains. It is how this information is used by archaeologists, and presented to the public, which is important.

The BBC 2 programme 'Chronicle' is one means of communication; anyone who has watched the programmes can only marvel at

the skill of the makers. The archaeology they present is one type of archaeology, as the paper by Bruce Norman shows. The magazine Popular Archaeology is an attempt to bridge the gap between professional and amateur, and despite one or two inconsistencies its continued existence is a good sign.

The problem of archaeology and the public is not a new one, as is shown by the historical perspective in Chris Chippindale's paper. The modern 'establishment' view of protecting our ancient monuments seems to have started with a member of the public protecting Stonehenge from the establishment! Similarly, long held views of ley line hunters, as discussed by Williamson and Bellamy, should awaken us to a different way of interpreting the past.

To quote from an American book on the subject, "No individual or organisation (public or private) has the right to act in a manner such that those actions adversely affect the weal, in this case,...archaeological materials and data" (McGimsey 1972:17). This includes archaeologists as well as selective hunters (e.g. those people who choose to dig for metal objects only). The conflict arises because archaeologists are seen as 'spoilsports' in not allowing destruction to take place and because they have a monopoly on excavation. The archaeologists should be at pains to show the public that it is not the objects themselves they want, but the information those objects contain. Haphazard digging and poor recording destroys the context of an artefact.

The purpose of this journal is to provoke discussion on important topics such as these. We might ask 'Why should archaeology try to communicate with everyone and not cut itself off (even more), as some other disciplines do?' The answer is simply that the information which archaeologists require for their reconstructions of the past is available, even accessible, to everyone. Unlike molecular structures which have to be teased out with scientific gadgetry, the raw material of archaeology exists all around us. Thus it is important a) to protect it from our own forces of destruction and, b) to allow its excavation to be done under 'controlled' conditions. This means that anyone interested in the past has a duty not to destroy potential information.

This Utopian ideal can only be achieved if the needs of archaeology and the desires of the general public are understood more widely.

References

Gregory, A. 1983 Archaeology and treasure hunting. A view from the other side. Treasure Hunting. April:45-8

McGimsey, C. III. 1972 Public Archaeology. Seminar Press, New York.

THE IMPACT OF METAL DETECTING ON ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC

Tony Gregory

Archaeology is now, and always has been, a largely middle class pursuit; no matter what our origins, the fact that we have been through the higher streams of secondary education and have gone on to study an academic discipline at University means that we are now firmly cast in the middle class mould. The same is generally true of the amateur side of archaeology; the county societies, which began life as a pastime for gentlemen, now aim at the skilled professional groups in modern society where academic interests are strong. The Rescue groups which have appeared in the last decades as amateur auxiliaries to the professional Units are drawn from the same groups. This has now become a closed circuit, as professional and academic archaeology becomes more specialised. As research and rescue projects become more particular, the amateur societies either follow suit or branch off into related fields. This tendency is visible in the county societies whose journals, bereft of the excavation reports which filled them in the 1960s, now carry large numbers of papers directed far more to the documentary side of local history than to the archaeological. Those amateur groups which follow the professional lead are too often regarded as popular support for the direction which archaeology is travelling today.

This direction is that of increased academicism; as the discipline of archaeology develops, so do its resources and its capability of answering questions. The result is often a series of priorities for research and excavation which enable archaeological problems to be posed and solved. Thus we begin to acquire specialised and invaluable knowledge of, for example, late Iron Age and Romano-British agricultural patterns and the tenurial patterns which supported them. These data, fed in by excavation units and interpreted by period and topic specialists, are the vital raw material for analysis and explanation for those more interested in theoretical questions. Seen from within, this is work of the greatest importance. But seen from without, what does it signify?

This is a key question, for the great problem is that archaeology has been developing in its own way, answering its own questions for several decades, with little regard for the public at large. That is not to say that we should reorientate and slant our studies to what the public want, but this should, and must be considered.

There is a huge potential public interest in archaeology in general; the Mary Rose project, the number of visitors to ancient monuments all over the country, and the interest in any excavation are evidence of this. But it is interest of a specific